

07/27/2007

HOUSE APPROVES \$1 MILLION TO HELP ESTABLISH A PICTOMETRY SYSTEM FOR BAYFIELD, BURNETT, DOUGLAS, AND WASHBURN COUNTIES

System Provides Detailed Images To Help Speed Emergency Response and County Planning

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Seventh District Congressman Dave Obey (D-WI) announced today that the U.S. House of Representatives has approved his request for \$1 million in next year's commerce, justice, state appropriations bill to help Bayfield, Burnett, Douglas, and Washburn Counties establish a Pictometry system – a database of high-resolution, full-color, digital aerial photos of the region to aid in emergency response and county planning.

“Speed is of the essence for emergency responders and the more information they have about where they're going and what they're going to encounter the better they can do their jobs,” said Obey, the Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee. “That's why I requested these funds to help set up this system. I hope it will really help emergency responders and county planners in Northwest Wisconsin.”

With its digital database of high-resolution photographs of a region, the Pictometry system is intended to enable fast and easy reference for both emergency response and county planning. For emergency responders, the system is intended to provide enough information to quickly and more effectively react to any given situation – for law enforcement that may mean knowing what a building’s measurements are during a hostage situation; for fire officials, the images can be used to measure the height of an elevator shaft for placement of ladders and hoses; for search and rescue or medical response units, the images may help locate and measure a ravine where an accident has taken place. For County and local planners, the system provides easy access to accurate geographic information that can save time and resources as decisions are being made.

The U.S. Capitol Police, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and over 200 counties across the country currently use Pictometry.

However, Obey noted that the Commerce, Justice, State Appropriations Bill must still be approved by the Senate and signed by the President before it becomes law. “But having these funds included in the House passed bill means that a major hurdle has been cleared,” he concluded.

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